

Amendments to the Management Plan for the Montebello/Barrow Islands Marine Conservation Reserves 2007-2017 Management Plan No 55 – January 2018

These amendments to the *Management Plan for the Montebello/Barrow Islands Marine Conservation Reserves 2007-2017 Management Plan No 55* were approved by the Minister for Environment on 3 January 2018. The amendments to the management plan came into operation on 16 January 2018, following publication in the *Government Gazette*.

The following text replaces text under the headings of Recreation Zones, Special Purpose Zones (Benthic Protection) and Special Purpose Zones (Pearling) on page 29 and 30 of the *Management Plan for the Montebello/Barrow Islands Marine Conservation Reserves 2007-2017 Management Plan No 55*.

Recreation Zones

There are two recreation zones (approximately 2% of the marine park) in the Montebello Islands Marine Park, located at the Southern Montebellos (approximately 1,036 ha) and Stephenson Channel (approximately 250 ha). The locations of the zones are shown in Figures 5, 6 and 8, and the permitted activities are shown in Table 2.

The recreational purpose of the Southern Montebellos and Stephenson Channel recreation zones is to provide opportunities for existing recreational activities and commercial non-extractive tourism activities in this area, including recreational fishing (subject to bag limits and other restrictions from DoF). Due to the relatively sheltered nature of the areas, as well as the existence of mooring sites, the areas are currently utilised for shore and dinghy-based recreational fishing and other recreational activities such as snorkelling, diving and nature appreciation. Recreational set and haul netting, recreational aquarium and specimen collecting and charter fishing are considered incompatible with the recreational purpose of these zones. However unguided recreational fishing by customers of charter operators is permitted. The boundaries of these recreation zones have been devised to encompass the majority of the areas used for recreational activities while not compromising the ecological values of the surrounding sanctuary zone. The recreation zones do not overlap any known high use commercial fishing areas or known petroleum reservoirs.

Special Purpose Zone (Benthic Protection)

There is one special purpose (benthic protection) zone (approximately 1,040 ha or 2 per cent of the marine park) in the Montebello Islands Marine Park. The location of this zone is shown in Figures 5-7 and the permitted activities are shown in Table 2.

The conservation purpose of the Montebellos Special Purpose (Benthic Protection) Zone is to protect representative areas of deep water habitat in the north-western area of the marine park, including complex bathymetry with high habitat diversity. The special purpose zone is also in the vicinity of important turtle aggregation areas and whale migration paths and has a high diversity of finfish and invertebrate species. Commercial, charter and recreational fishing (with the exception of line trolling) and specimen shell collecting are considered to be incompatible with the conservation purpose of this zone (Table 2). The boundaries of this zone have been placed to allow recreational and commercial trolling to occur. Due to the low level of use it is not considered necessary to prohibit anchoring in this zone. There may be a need however, to restrict this activity if significant damage to benthic communities occurs during the life of this plan.

Special Purpose Zones (Pearling)

Special purpose zones (pearling) (approximately 550ha or 1 per cent of the marine park) are established for Morgan Pearls Limited's existing pearling leases A, B, C, D, G, H, I, J, O and P, as well as the quarantine site in Claret Bay, to allow pearling to be the priority use of these areas. The locations of all special purpose zones (pearling) are shown in Figures 5-8 and the permitted activities are shown in Table 2.

The other existing pearling leases currently held by Morgan Pearls Limited (i.e. lease areas E, F, K and L) are zoned general use. The owners, in consultation with the MPRA, are undertaking a process of rationalisation of these areas. It is anticipated that this will be completed in the early phase of the management plan. Fantome Pearls' existing pearling leases in the Lowendal Islands are within the unzoned area of the marine management area.

The conservation purpose of these zones is to protect subtidal silt and sand habitats which support rich and diverse fauna, and the excellent sediment and water quality of the area which are essential to the maintenance of healthy marine ecosystems. Commercial trap fishing, long lining, beach seine netting, wetlining, prawn trawling, crabbing and the collection of coral, 'live' sand and 'live' rock are considered incompatible with the conservation purpose of this zone. In addition, recreational set and haul netting and aquarium and specimen collecting are also considered incompatible with the conservation purpose of these zones. All other activities are currently permitted, however if these activities conflict in a significant and unavoidable way with the purpose of the zones these will not be permitted to continue. It should be noted that the designation of these zones for the primary purpose of pearling does not provide automatic approval for future pearling proposals. Any such proposal will be assessed in accordance with Ministerial Policy Guideline No 8 (DoF, 1998) and only permitted where this use is compatible with the maintenance of the values of the reserves. It should also be noted that this does not preclude a lease being held or created within the general use zone of the marine park or unclassified areas of the marine management area.

The permitted uses tables and associated key below replace those on page 21 of the *Management Plan for the Montebello/Barrow Islands Marine Conservation Reserves 2007-2017 Management Plan No 55*.

Table 2: Uses permitted in each zone of the Montebello Islands Marine Park and Barrow Island Marine Park

Activity	Sanctuary zone	Recreation zone	Special purpose zone (benthic protection)	Special purpose zone (pearling)	General use zone
COMMERCIAL					
Pearling ^{bd}	No	No	No	Yes	Assess
Aquaculture ^{bd}	No	No	No	Assess ^e	Assess
Commercial beche de mer fishing ^{bd}	No	No	No	Yes ^e	Yes
Commercial trap fishing ^{bd}	No	No	No	No	Yes
Commercial long line ^{bd}	No	No	No	No	Yes
Commercial beach seine ^{bd}	No	No	No	No	Yes
Commercial wetlining ^{bd}	No	No	Yes (trolling only)	No	Yes
Commercial prawn trawling ^{bd}	No	No	No	No	Yes
Commercial crabbing ^{bd}	No	No	No	No	Yes
Commercial aquarium collecting ^{bd}	No	No	No	Yes ^e	Yes
Commercial collection of coral, 'live' sand and 'live' rock ^{bd}	No	No	No	No	Yes
Commercial specimen shell collecting ^{bd}	No	No	No	Yes ^e	Yes
Mineral & petroleum exploration (seismic) ^f	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess ^e	Assess
Petroleum drilling & mineral development ^f	No	No	Assess	No	Assess
Charter vessels - fishing ^{bdg}	No	No ^h	Yes (trolling only)	Yes ^e	Yes
Charter vessels - other ^{cdg}	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ^e	Yes
RECREATIONAL					
Boating (motor & non-motorised) ^{ag}	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ^e	Yes
Surface water sports ^{ag}	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ^e	Yes
Recreational rock lobster fishing ^b	No	Yes	No	Yes ^e	Yes
Recreational line fishing ^b	No	Yes	Yes (trolling only)	Yes ^e	Yes
Recreational set and haul netting ^b	No	No	No	No	Yes
Recreational throw netting ^b	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Spearfishing ^b	No	Yes	No	Yes ^e	Yes
Recreational crabbing ^b	No	Yes	No	Yes ^e	Yes
Recreational aquarium & specimen collecting ^b	No	No	No	No	Yes
Snorkelling and diving	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ^e	Yes
Wildlife interaction ^c	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ^e	Yes
Surfing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
OTHER					
Proposals for marine infrastructure (e.g. moorings) ^{ad}	Assess	Assess	Assess	Assess ^e	Assess
Pipelines (including dredging for pipelines) ^f	No	No	Assess	No	Assess
Dredging and dredge spoil dumping for shipping activities ^d	No	No	No	No	Assess
Research ^d	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ^e	Yes
Military flight training in restricted airspace R852A & R852B (above 10,000 ft)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

KEY:

- a. Subject to the *Western Australian Marine Act 1982*.
- b. Subject to the FRM Act and *Pearling Act 1990*.
- c. Subject to the CALM Act and WC Act.
- d. Licence required from DEC and/or DoF and/or DoIR and/or EPA.
- e. Activities permitted unless the activity is shown to be incompatible with the specified primary purpose of the zone.
- f. Subject to the EP Act.
- g. Boating and associated activities, and surface water sports may be restricted in specific areas where there is a clear need for such restrictions.
- h. Charter vessel fishing is not permitted in the two recreation zones, however unguided recreational fishing by customers of charter operators is permitted in recreation zones.
- Assess Proposal will be assessed by relevant agencies in accordance with standard procedures.